

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

- Claims 1, 3-5, and 7-9 are pending in the Application after entry of this amendment.
- Claims 1, 3-9 are rejected by Examiner.
- Claims 1, 3-4, and 7-9 are amended by Applicant.
- Claim 6 is cancelled.

Claim Objections

Claims 3-5 stand objected to for referring to cancelled Claim 2. Applicant amends Claims 3-4 to refer to pending Claim 1. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection based on the amendments to Claims 3-4.

Claim Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, and 3-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,615,248 to Smith et al. (Smith) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,931,593 to Grooters et al. (Grooters). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection via amendment.

Claim 1 is amended to include the subject matter of now cancelled Claim 6. Specifically, amended Claim 1 now recites (in relevant part):

“sending over the network, from the controlling device, a single command specifying a filtering criterion but not specifying a recipient device, each recipient device not responding if the respective device has no content corresponding to the criterion;” (Part of pending Claim 1)

This subject matter is also discussed in the as-filed specification that is represented by US Patent Publication No. US 2006/0048187 paragraph 0024 which reads, in relevant part as follows:

“Advantageously, this command is transmitted throughout the network without specifying recipient devices, each device of the network deciding whether to respond to it. This transmission saves on bandwidth and avoids having to send as many commands as there are devices. The devices that have no content corresponding to the criterion do not need to respond, which avoids sending an empty list. ” (Present Application, para. 0024)

Smith describes a method for searching, accessing and displaying data from various content sources through a single user interface. The method of Smith includes providing a first user selectable object via the single user interface, and providing a second user selectable object via the single user interface. The Smith method also comprises receiving a user generated search query; searching through data available from the first content source and from the second content source for data related to the user generated search query; displaying results of data found from the first content source and/or the second content source determined to be related to the user generated search query. (See Smith, col. 2, lines 48-65).

Smith Figure 2 depicts a Personal Computer 100 connected with many “user selectable objects” such as antennas 206 and 227, a camera 221, a display device 175, a video blaster 275, a juke box 242, and a home network 269. The Personal Computer can remotely control each of these devices; i.e. it can send requests to each of them and receive information from each of them. Smith describes that the user of the PC can launch a search of specific content information into the user selectable objects. The launching of a search is possible through a menu such as disclosed by the Figures 4 or 5. This menu presents, in the window 430, all of the user-selectable objects, such as EPG 431, DVD 432, Games 433, Web Search 434 or Music Guide 435. All theses

sources can provide access to content information. (Example, see Smith, column 8 lines 16–22).

Smith discusses that, by using the menu 430 of Figure 4, the user can select several user-selectable objects to launch a specific search upon those several user-selectable objects. By selecting the icon 243 named “Object Related Any” that is placed above the window 430 in Figure 4, the user can launch a search in all the user-selectable objects listed in the menu 430.

Smith at column 9 lines 1-8 states:

“In a preferred embodiment, the user is able to directly enter a “search query” in query entry 440 and select the Object Related Any 423 option to search across various content sources, such as an EPG, the Internet, Games, Music Guide, etc., for relevant data relating to the “search query”, rather than having to conduct an initial content specific search before being able to select the Object Related Any 423 search option.” (Smith, col. 9, lines 1-8).

However, Smith is silent concerning the amended Claim 1 element of “a single command specifying a filtering criterion is sent by the controlling device”. In Smith, the PC 100 is connected to many different user-selectable objects that may have different electrical and protocol interfaces. Therefore, one of skill in the art may assume that the PC 100 individually sends the same request to each of the devices listed in the menu 430 using its unique electrical interface and protocol format.

In contrast, amended pending Claim 1 relates that a single command is sent over the domestic network. In this manner, it is possible to save on bandwidth and to avoid having to send as many commands as there are devices. In the context of the invention of Smith, it seems reasonable that one of skill in the art would assume that a search query command is sent to each of the multiple devices; such as one command to the camera 221, another to the stereo 248, another to the VCR 236, another to the CD Jukebox 242, etc. Whereas, only one command is sent per the pending claims.

Moreover, the Claim 1 element of " each recipient device not responding if the respective device has no content corresponding to the criterion" is not taught nor suggested by Smith. In a context of centralized communication by a PC, such as PC 100 of Figure 2 of Smith, one of skill in the art would assume that if a slave device does not respond, the non-responding device could be considered "out of order" by the PC and an error message would be generated. Thus, a non-responding device may not be compatible with the PC-centric configuration of Smith. Whereas Claim 1 recites that devices do not respond if they have no relevant content, non-responding devices may be incompatible with the PC-centric system of Smith.

Grooters discusses a method for automatically generating content channels associated with audiovisual media already delivered on devices of a local network system. The local network 210 comprises a plurality of apparatus such as a communications link to a television 230, a video game player 240, a DVD player 250, a CD player 260, a radio tuner 270, and a home control device 280, etc. A HAVi protocol is implemented for the communication between the devices. Grooters column 5 lines 46-48 states:

"The information appliance 310 may be capable of displaying an appliance channel list 330 of all resources available on the network."
(Grooters, col. 5, lines 46-48).

However, Grooters, like Smith, fails to discuss the Claim 1 aspect of "a single command specifying a filtering criterion but not specifying a recipient device, each recipient device not responding if the respective device has no content corresponding to the criterion" sent by a controlling device in a domestic network.

Since independent Claims 7-9 are amended with similar elements, then neither Smith nor Grooters disclose all of the elements of the pending amended claims.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Smith, nor Grooters, nor the combination of Smith and Grooters teach or suggest the amended features of pending independent Claims 1, and 7-9. Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1 and 7-9 are not rendered obvious under 35 USC §103(a) because all elements of the pending claims are not found in the cited art. Accordingly, pending dependent Claims 3-5, which depend on independent Claim 1, are also non-obvious per MPEP §2143.03.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that the amended pending claims patentably define over the cited art. Continued Examination is respectfully requested. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of all pending claims is also respectfully requested as is consideration for a Notice of Allowance.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 07-0832 therefore.

Respectfully submitted,
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